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## Raffles's History of Java.

*The History of Java.* By Thomas Stamford Raffles, Esq. late Lieutenant-Governor of that Island and its Dependencies. In two Volumes, with a Map and Plates. Quarto. Printed for Black, Parbury and Allen, Lendenhall-Street, and John Murray, Albemarle-Street, 1818.

(From the Edinburgh Review, No. LXII.)

We now redeem our pledge to the public, by offering some account of the very valuable work before us; which presents, to the British reader at least, the only authentic and detailed account of a land of eminent fertility and happy situation, inhabited by an interesting race of people, hardly fewer than five millions in number; and whose history, it is now discovered, chiefly by the industry of our countrymen, is connected with that of the three great civilized nations of continental Asia—the Hindoos, the Chinese, and the Arabs.

Of the stock of important information contained in Sir Stamford Raffles's two large volumes, it is but a small share which our limits will enable us to give. We hasten, however, to give such a sketch as those limits will afford; and we shall do so under the heads of *Topography—Climate—Physical—Moral Character—Inhabitants—Government—Law and Religion—Amusements—Language and Literature—Agriculture—State of the Arts—Population—Civil History and Revenue*; summing up the whole with a few remarks on Colonization.

The word *Java*, corrupted by Europeans into *Java*, with less violence than usual to Asiatic orthography, is properly the name of the principal nation of the island, bestowed, as is common in such cases, (of which we have a domestic illustration in the word *England*.) upon the whole territory, and requiring, in the original, the addition of some such words as *land, country, island, &c. &c.*—making the land, the country, or island of the *Java*.

Java lies between the longitudes of 105° 11' and 114° 33' east of Greenwich, and between 5° 52' and 8° 46' of south latitude. Its extreme length is 666 statute miles, and its extreme breadth about 135; but that breadth is very unequal, and in some places does not exceed 50 miles; so that the area of the island is little more than 50,000 square miles. Madura, an island lying close to Java, where it is narrowest, and seeming to form a part of it, is 91½ English miles in length, and about 31 in breadth.

The most remarkable circumstance in the form of Java thus appears to be its irregularity, narrowness, and great length,—which necessarily give it an extraordinary extent of coast, render all its parts remarkably accessible, and have, in all probability, contributed to its early civilization and improvement.

The island, however, is rather deficient in harbours; the north coast affording but one good one, that of *Susabaya*, formed by the vicinity of *Madura*, with one good roadstead, that of *Batavia*; which indeed, from the depth of the bay, and the number of islands which shelter it, may almost deserve the name of a harbour. The mildness of the seasons, and the tranquillity of the seas, the absence of typhoons, hurricanes, and storms, render this less a defect than it would prove in less favoured latitudes.

'Passing from the coast to the interior of the country,' observes Sir Stamford Raffles, 'the stranger cannot fail to be struck with the bold outline and prominent features of its scenery. An uninterrupted series of large mountains, varying in their elevation above the sea, from five to eleven, and even twelve thousand feet, and exhibiting, in their round base and pointed tops, their volcanic origin, extend through the whole length of the island. The several large mountains comprised in this series, and which are in number 38, though different from each other in external figure, agree in the general attribute of volcanoes, having a broad base, gradually verging towards the summit, in the form of a cone.'

They all rise from a plain, but little elevated above the level of the sea; and each must be considered as a separate mountain, raised by a cause independent of that which produced the others. Most of them have been formed at a very remote period, and are covered by the vegetation of many ages; but the indications, and remains of their former eruptions, are numerous and unequivocal. The craters of several are completely extinct; those of others still contain small apertures, which continue to discharge sulphurous vapours and smoke; and many of them have had eruptions during late years. 'Besides the mountains of the larger series above described, there are extensive ranges of mountains of inferior elevation, sometimes connected with the larger series, and sometimes independent of them, which are also for the most part volcanic. Numerous ridges of hills traverse the country in various directions; and the surface of the island, in general, independent of those more striking features, is in the most part undulating and uneven, except on the sea-coast.'

'A country which abounds in mountains, is seldom deficient in rivers; accordingly, no region is perhaps better watered. Java is singularly favoured in the number of its streams. The size of the island does not admit of the formation of large rivers; but there are probably fifty, that, in the wet season, bear down rafts charged with timber, and other rough produce of the country; and not less than five or six, at all times navigable, to the distance of five or six miles from the coast. It would be vain to attempt numbering those which are precious to the agriculturist; they are many hundreds, if not thousands.'

The following is a description drawn with equal happiness and fidelity, of this fine island.

'The general aspect of Java, on the northern coast, is low; in many places swampy, and overgrown with mangrove trees and bushes, particularly towards the west. The southern coast, on the contrary, consists almost entirely of a series of rocks and cliffs, which rise perpendicularly to a considerable height. In the interior, stupendous mountains stretch longitudinally throughout the island; while others of an inferior elevation, and innumerable ranges of hills running in various directions, serve to form and confine plains and valleys of various elevation and extent. On the northern side, the ascent is in general very gradual from the seacoast to the immediate base of the mountains, particularly in the western part of the island, where it has the greatest breadth, and where the mountains are situated far inland.

'Although the northern coast is in many parts flat and uninteresting, the interior and southern provinces, from the mountainous character of the country, may be reckoned amongst the most romantic and highly diversified in the world; uniting all the rich and magnificent scenery which waving forests, never-failing streams, and constant verdure, can present; heightened by a pure atmosphere, and the glowing tints of a tropical sun.

'Quitting the low coast of the north, in many parts unhealthy, the traveller can hardly advance five miles inland, without feeling a sensible improvement in the atmosphere and climate. As he proceeds, at every step he breathes a purer air, and surveys a brighter scene. At length he reaches the high lands. There the boldest forms of nature are tempered by the rural arts of man; stupendous mountains clothed with abundant harvests; impetuous cataracts tamed to the peasant's will. Here is perpetual verdure; here are tints of the brightest hue. In the hottest season the air retains its freshness; in the driest, the innumerable rills and rivulets preserve much of their water. These the mountain farmer diverts in endless conduits and canals to irrigate the land, which he has laid in terraces for its reception; it then descends to the plains, and spreads fertility wherever it flows; till at last, by numerous outlets, it discharges itself into the sea.'

The account of the mineralogical structure of the island, is summed up by Sir Stamford Raffles as follows:

'From these and all other investigations yet made, the constitution of Java appears to be exclusively volcanic. From the vast Asiatic chain of mountains, one branch of which terminates at Ceylon, proceeds another, which, traversing Arrakan, Pegu, and the Malayan peninsula, extends to Sumatra, Banka, and Biliton, where it may be said to disappear. On Java; no granite has been discovered. In its constitution as in its direction, it may be considered as the first of a series of volcanic islands, which extend nearly eastward from the Straits of Sunda for about twenty-five degrees.'

This mineralogical constitution, we believe, is unfavourable to metals; and no ores are any where found sufficiently rich to reward the cost of washing them. A small quantity of quicksilver has been found; and here and there a little gold, of fineness not exceeding 16 carats.

The seasons in Java, as we may look for, are not a summer and a winter, in our European sense of the words, but a wet and dry season. The westerly monsoon, and, with it, wet and occasionally boisterous weather, is expected from October to March; and the easterly winds and fair season fill up the rest of the year. In the lands which do not rise high above the level of the sea, Fahrenheit's thermometer in the morning is from 70° to 74° and at noon about 83°. In the hottest times, it rarely rises to 90° any where. As the land rises, the thermometer falls from 70° to 65° and 60° at noon; and on the summit of one of the mountains, it has been observed as low as 27°. Ice as thick as a Spanish dollar has been found; and hoar frost, denominated *Bohan Upas*, or poisonous dew, has been observed on the trees and vegetation of some of the higher regions. After this account of the climate, we have the following most important remark on its salubrity.

'The general inference which has been drawn by professional men, from the experience which the occupation of Java by the British has afforded, is, that with the exception of the town of Batavia, and some parts of the northern coast, the island of Java stands on a level, in point of salubrity, with the healthiest parts of British India, or any tropical country in the world.'

Of the inhabitants and their manners, this is Sir Stamford Raffles's very sensible account.

'The inhabitants of Java and Madura are in stature rather below the middle size, though not so short as the Bugias, and many of the other islanders. They are upon the whole well shaped, though less remarkably so, than the Malays, and erect in their figures. Their limbs are slender; and the wrists and ankles particularly small. In general they allow the body to retain its natural shape. The only exceptions to this observation are, an attempt to prevent the growth, or to reduce the size of the waist, by compressing it into the narrowest limits; and the practice still more injurious to female elegance of drawing too tightly that part of the dress which covers the bosom. Deformity is very rare among them. The forehead is high, the eyebrows well marked and distant from the eyes, which are somewhat Chinese, or rather Tartar, in the formation of the inner angle. The colour of the eye is dark; the nose small and somewhat flat, but less so than the islanders generally. The mouth is well formed; but the lips are large, and their beauty generally injured by the practice of filing and dyeing the teeth black, and by the use of tobacco, fire, &c. The cheek bones are usually prominent; the beard very scanty; the hair of the head generally lank and black, but sometimes waving in curls, and partially tinged with a deep reddish brown colour. The countenance is mild, placid, and thoughtful, and easily expresses respect, gaiety, earnestness, indifference, bashfulness, or anxiety.'—'In complexion, the Javans, as well as the other eastern islanders, may be considered rather as a yellow, than a copper coloured or black race. Their standard of beauty in this respect is a "virgin gold colour."—The women, in general, are not so good looking as the men; and, to Europeans, many of them, particularly when advanced in age, appear hideously ugly.'—'The common people have little leisure or inclination for improving their minds, or acquiring information; but they are far from being deficient in natural sagacity or docility. Their organs are acute and delicate; their observation is ready, and their judgment of character generally correct.'—'Though deficient in energy, and excited to action with difficulty, the effect probably of an enervating climate, and a still more enervating government, they are capable of great occasional exertion, and sometimes display a remarkable perseverance in surmounting obstacles, or enduring labours. No people can be more tractable; and although their external appearance indicates listlessness, and sometimes stupidity, none possess a quicker apprehension of what is clearly stated, or attain a more rapid progress in what they have a desire to learn.'—'The Javanese are remarkable for their unsuspecting and almost infantine credulity. Susceptible of every impression that artifice may attempt to make upon them, and liable to every delusion propagated by the prejudiced or designing, they not inaptly compare themselves to a piece of white cloth, on which any dye or shade of colour may be laid. They lend an easy credence to omens, to prognostics of prophets, and to quacks. They easily become the dupes of any religious fanatic; and credit, without scruple or examination, his claim to supernatural powers.'

'When not corrupted by indulgence on the one hand, or stupified by oppression on the other, the Javans appear to be a generous and warm-hearted people; in their domestic relations they are kind, affectionate, gentle, and contented. In their public, they are obedient, honest, and faithful. In their intercourse with society, they display, in a high degree, the virtues of honesty, plain-dealing, and candour. Their ingenuousness is such, that, as the first Dutch authorities have acknowledged, prisoners brought to the bar on criminal charges, if really guilty, nine times out of ten confess, without disguise or equivocation, the full extent and exact circumstances of their offences; and communicate, when required, more information on the matter at issue, than all the rest of the evidence.'—'Hospitality is universal among them; it is enjoined by their most ancient institutions, and practised with readiness and zeal.'—'They are more remarkable for passive fortitude than active courage; and endure with patience, rather than make exertions with spirit and courage.'—'They are little liable to those fits and starts of anger, or those sudden explosions of fury, which appear among northern nations.'

Sir Stamford Raffles informs us truly, that those wild acts of desperation, called mucks, are far indeed from being common; and he adds, 'atrocious crimes are extremely rare, and have been principally owing to misgovernment when they have occurred;—an incontestable axiom, which applies to other people as well as the poor Javanese. The Government, or misgovernment under which this character is formed, is described by Sir Stamford Raffles as follows.

'The Government of the Javanese is a pure unmixed despotism; but there are customs of which the people are very tenacious, and which the sovereign seldom invades.—His subjects have no right of liberty, of person or property: his breath can raise the humblest individual from the dust to the highest distinction—or wither the honours of the most exalted. There is no hereditary rank; nothing to oppose his will. Not only honours, posts and distinctions, depend upon his pleasure, but all the landed property of his dominions remains at his disposal, and may, together with its cultivators, be parcelled out by his order among the officers of his household, the members of his family, the ministers of his pleasures, or the useful servants of the State. Every officer is paid by grants of land, or by a power to receive from the peasantry a certain proportion of the produce of certain villages or districts.'

The orders of the despots are, as usual in the East, issued through a vizier (Pateh). There is a higher and a lower class of privileged nobility, from among the first of which are chosen the officers of state, and the governors of provinces. The second are a class of executive officers, who

administer the inferior details of government. Of the Oriental Archipelago, indeed, we may observe, that civilization and despotism seem to go hand in hand. Each tribe has a government, despotic in proportion as it is improved; and the scale may be traced from the naked negro tribes, who acknowledge no leaders, to the Javanese, who present a fine picture of unlimited despotism. Had we no other guides than the languages of the different tribes, these would afford ample testimony of the fact. The language of Java is actually divided into two speeches, more distinct than any two dialects of the same European tongue,—a language for the master, and a language for the slave. The same distinction is preserved as we descend in the scale of civilization; but less marked, until it disappears altogether, among the rude tribes; with whom no form of government is discoverable. Civil liberty or freedom belongs then, perhaps, only to the very highest, or to the lowest stages of society. The constitution of some Javanese villages, presents a singular exception to the general despotism. In these we find a sort of elective constitution; but it is among the mountains, the usual haunts of freedom, that we discover these slender relics of it. The state of Law and Religion need not detain us long.

'The judicial and executive powers are generally exercised by the same individual. The written law of the island, according to which justice is administered, and the courts are regulated, is that of the *Koraw*, as modified by custom and usage. The Javans have been now converted to the Mahomedan religion, about three centuries and a half, dating from the destruction of the Hindu kingdom of Majapahit, in the year 1400 (A. D. 1478) of the Javan era. Of all the nations who have adopted that creed, they are among the most recent converts; and it may be safely added, that few others are so little acquainted with its doctrines, and partake so little of its zeal and intolerance.'—'The courts of justice are of two descriptions; those of the *Panghulu* or high priest, and those of the *Jaksa*. In the former, the Mahomedan law is more strictly followed; in the latter, it is blended with the customs and usages of the country. The former take cognisance of capital offences; of suits of divorce; of contracts and inheritance: They are also, in some respects, courts of appeal from the authority of the *Jaksa*. The latter take cognisance of thefts, robberies, and all inferior offences. Its officers are employed in taking down depositions, examining evidence, inspecting the general police of the country, and in some measure acting as public prosecutors: These last functions are implied in the title of the office itself, *Jaksa* meaning to guard or watch.'—'At the seat of government are supreme courts of the *Panghulu* and *Jaksa*:—to these there is an appeal from similar, but inferior tribunals, established within each province. Petty tribunals, under like names, are even established under the jurisdiction of a *Demang*, or chief of a subdivision, and sometimes of a *Bahal*, or head of a village; but in these the authority of the *Panghulu* extend no further than to take down evidence to be transmitted to some higher authority, to settle petty disputes, and perform the ordinary ceremonies of religion, inseparable among the Javans, as well as all other Mahomedans from the administration of justice.'—'Such, however, is the nature of the native government, that these officers are considered rather as the law assessors, or counsel, of the immediate inferior officer of the executive government, than the independent ministers of justice. In such cases as come before them, they examine the evidence, and point out the law and custom, to the executive officer, who is himself generally too ignorant and indolent to undertake it. When the evidence is gone through, and the point of law ascertained, the whole is brought before him; at whose discretion it remains to pass judgment. It is, however, admitted, that in matters of little moment, where his passions and interests are not concerned, the decision is left to the law officers; but in all matters of importance, he will not fail to exercise his privileges of interference.' This is truly an abominable picture of despotism.

The Amusements of the Javanese are a rude drama, where the actors are generally masked;—puppet-shows, dancing girls, as in other countries of the East;—tilts and tournaments, in which it does not appear that much dexterity is displayed;—the chase, rather awkwardly pursued;—the combat of the tiger and the buffalo,—and of the former with criminals, for the entertainment of the court!

In an exhibition of this kind which took place about ten years ago, two criminals were exposed for having set fire to a dwelling. They were provided each with a *Ariz*, which was long, but broken off, or blunted, at the top; and the tiger was let in upon them separately, in a large cage constructed for the purpose. The first was soon destroyed; but the second, after a combat of nearly two hours, succeeded in killing the tiger, by repeated cuts about the head and under the ears and eyes. On this a smaller tiger, or rather leopard, was let in upon him; and the criminal being equally successful in this combat, was released. This success, as in the judicial ordeals of the dark ages, was taken for a manifestation by Heaven of his innocence, and not only secured his pardon, but procured for him the rank of a *Mantri*, as a recompense for the danger to which he was exposed in its vindication.

This termination of the combat, however, we are obliged to remark, displays the refined ferocity of the native character, in a more favourable light than truth will allow; for the fate of the prisoner is usually inevitable, whatever be his dexterity or courage. The Javanese are incurable gamblers. They delight in cock and quail fighting, and even stake money upon a battle between two crickets or grasshoppers, the little warriors being stimulated to the fight by the titillation of a blade of grass! They are particularly addicted to games of chance, from the highest to the lowest. They form a principal occupation of the court; and the meanest labourers are to be seen in groups along the highways, women as well as men, staking their hard-earned wages,—and their arms and clothes, when the former are expended.



Of the interesting subjects of Language, and Literature, we can afford but a brief sketch. In Java and Madura, there are three distinct languages;—the Javanese, the language of the populous, fertile, and more civilized portion of Java;—the Sunda, the language of the mountaineers of the west end, embracing about a third of the whole area of the Island, but comprehending not more than a tenth of the population;—and the language of the Island of Madura. The two last are very rude and uncultivated languages, and bear to the Javanese, in many respects, the same relation that the Celtic languages of Britain do to the English.—The languages of Java (and the same observation may indeed be extended to many others of the Archipelago, at least to all that have received any portion of cultivation) seem to be composed of four distinct parts. The first of these, and the basis of the language, is the aboriginal dialect of the Savage tribe, from which the nation sprung; the second, the great Insular language of Asia; the third the Sanscrit; and the fourth the Arabic.—Commercial intercourse has introduced, in minute portions, Persian, Chinese, Telinga, Portuguese, Dutch, and English,—which are yet hardly naturalized. The aboriginal savage dialect will be found distinct in every language. For the great and singular discovery of a general insular language, we are indebted to that indefatigable and able scholar, Mr. Marsden. This language extends from Madagascar, inclusive, to the South Sea Islands; the Philippines, and Guinea or Papua.—Of the people, by whom it was invented, not a record remains; every thing concerning them is lost in the wreck of time.—The Sanscrit language, introduced into the Archipelago, through the medium of Religion and Learning, and protected against oral corruptions by an alphabet formed on almost perfect principles, exists in great purity and abundance in the Javanese, the most cultivated of the Insular tongues. It becomes rare in proportion as the tribes become more barbarous; and the progressive decrease is traced through the Bali, the Madurese, Sunda, Malay, Battak, Lanpung, Bugis and Macassar, until it disappears altogether in the dialects of the savages or cannibals.—From this one fact we may easily estimate the great influence of the institutions of the Hindoos, in civilising the tribes of the Oriental Islands.

The Arabic language has followed, as usual, the Arabic religion; its influence has been mostly exerted on the maritime dialects, but is considerable in none. The Arabs, particularly in their decline, had not naval skill to make such distant conquests.—This, and their frequent harsh consonants, so foreign to the soft and vocal genius of the East Insular tongues, have contributed to exclude it. The Javanese language, in its structure, is remarkable for simplicity. It is copious to exuberance, and abounds in synonymous terms. It is, as already noticed, divided into a polite, and ordinary dialect; to which is to be added, an obsolete dialect, the language of the priesthood of a former religion, and now superseded by the Arabic—perhaps, too, the language of literature, and the only written language, till banished by the apostles of Mahomedanism, when necessity suggested the adoption of the vernacular tongue; as, with ourselves, the Reformation contributed to the disuse of the corrupted Latin, which was used in religion and literature before it.—The literature of Java, with exceptions too inconsiderable to deserve notice, is all poetical, or rather metrical. This an incontestable proof of barbarism. People write for amusement, before they write for utility or instruction. It is only when they have something of intrinsic importance to tell, that they have recourse to sober prose. The Javanese authors still deal only in dreams, prodigies, supernatural agency, and mysteries; and their most recent as well as most ancient works are equally in verse.

Javanese literature may be classed under the four following subdivisions.—Songs, or odes, in the vernacular language.—Romances in the Kawi, or obsolete dialect, founded in Hindu legends adapted to Javanese localities;—romances in the vernacular tongue, founded on ancient Javanese story;—and, lastly, Metrical Histories of the last three hundred years of Javanese history;—with a strange mixture of accurate detail, imbecile credulity, and monstrous absurdity, but still affording a faithful picture of the human mind, in this stage of society.

As usual in such cases, the Songs, the simple effusions of nature, are much better than the more elaborate efforts of bad taste, affectation, and puerility.—The Romances in the Kawi, or obsolete language, afford now and then a bold metaphor or simile, probably borrowed from the original Hindu stock, which deserves the name of Poetry; but the two remaining departments have nothing to redeem them from the charges of utter inanity, or trifling puerility. The following is a specimen from an epitome of the Mahabarat in the ancient Javanese. The appearance of the Panda forces going to battle is described.

‘Their march commenced with the morning, and with warlike shouts they quitted Wirata. All attired in red, like the sun beginning his flight from the ocean, they made their appearance. Like the sun when about to disperse light on the world, or when appearing over the summits of the hills, when the woods, the clouds, the mountains, and all nature partakes of the red hue of his morning beams,—thus appeared the army of the Panda.’

We come next to the most important and perfect of their arts, that of Agriculture.

‘The island of Java,’ says our author, ‘is a great agricultural country; its soil is the grand source of its wealth. In its cultivation, the inhabitants exert their chief industry: and upon its produce they rely, not only for their subsistence, but the few articles of foreign luxury, or convenience, which they purchase. The Javans are a nation of husbandmen, and exhibit that simple structure of society incident to such a stage of its progress. To

the crop, the mechanic looks immediately for his wages, the soldier for his pay, the magistrate for his salary, the priest for his stipend, and the government for its tribute. The wealth of a province or village is measured by the extent and fertility of its land, its facilities for rice irrigation, and the number of its buffaloes.’

‘The soil of Java, though in many parts much neglected, is remarkable for the abundance and variety of its productions. With very little care or exertion on the part of the cultivator, it yields all that the wants of the island demand, and is capable of supplying resources far above any thing that the indolence or ignorance of the people, either oppressed under the despotism of their own sovereigns, or harassed by the rapacity of strangers, have yet permitted them to enjoy. Lying under a tropical sun, it produces, as before observed, all the fruits of a tropical climate; while, in many districts, its mountains and eminences make up for the difference of latitude, and give it, though only a few degrees from the Equator, all the advantages of temperate regions. The *bambos*, the cocoanut tree, the sugar-cane, cotton shrub, and the coffee plant, here flourish in the greatest luxuriance, and yield products of the best quality. Rice, the great staple of subsistence, covers the slopes of the mountains and the low fields, and gives a return of thirty, forty, or fifty fold; while maize, or even wheat and rye, and the other plants of Europe, may be cultivated to advantage on high and inland situations: Such is the fertility of the soil, that, in some places, after yielding two, and sometimes three crops in the year, it is not necessary even to change the culture. Water, which is so much wanted, and which is seldom found in requisite abundance in tropical regions, here flows in the great est plenty. Nothing can be conceived more beautiful to the eye, or more gratifying to the imagination, than the prospect of the rich variety of hill and dale, of rich plantations and fruit-trees or forests, of natural streams and artificial currents, which presents itself to the eye in several of the eastern and middle provinces, at some distance from the coast.—The whole country, as seen from mountains of considerable elevation, appears a rich, diversified, and well-watered garden, animated with villages, interspersed with the most luxuriant fields, and covered with the freshest verdure.’ This indeed is a bright account of a land highly gifted.—‘The farming stock of the cultivator is as limited as his wants are few, and his cottage inartificial. It usually consists of a pair of buffaloes, or oxen, and a few rude implements of husbandry.’ ‘The cattle are strong and excellent, and, from the abundance of vegetation, always in high condition,—very different from the herds of Hindustan, condemned to starvation during that large portion of the year when vegetable life is half destroyed. The implements of husbandry are a plough, harrow, hoe, pruning-knife, and a reaping-knife; the whole of which, taken together, do not cost more than from seven to ten shillings. No dressing is applied to the land. For the principal husbandry, that of wet rice, water supplies its place, not only fertilizing the ground, but even supplying the plant perhaps with a large portion of its nourishment. The practice of taking a rotation of crops, is of course not systematically pursued, but it is understood. A green crop generally follows a white crop; and thus we have pulses, farinaceous roots, and perennial cottons following the rice crop. But this last is the grand object of attention.’ ‘The rice is of two kinds; that which grows submerged in water, and that which grows in dry lands, like our European grains. The former is the most extensively cultivated, the most productive, and the most valuable.’

The Javanese are skilful in the culture of the first, and comparatively ignorant of the management of all dry crops, in which there is no substitute for dressing the land, so happily supplied in the other by the abundance and skilful distribution of water.

Next to rice, the most important article of husbandry is maize, or Indian corn, the culture of which is rapidly increasing of late years; as the population increases and presses upon the demand for rice, by bringing into culture most of the good lands calculated for yielding the latter on the present system of husbandry. Farinaceous roots, and pulses in almost endless variety, come next in importance; to which, if we add the oil-giving plants, the useful and abundant palms, the sugar cane, the cotton and tobacco plants, the coffee and pepper plants, with many inferior species, a profusion of fruit-trees and useful woods, we shall find that no country in the world can compare with this fine island in the variety and richness of its husbandry.

The state of the Arts among the Javanese will not occupy us long; and to the sciences, they are absolutely strangers. They are ignorant of the most common rules of Arithmetic. The Bramins introduced among them some knowledge of Hindu astronomy; vestiges of which, as well as of the Indian calendar, may still be traced. It would be out of place to give any detailed account of those domestic arts which bestow upon them that portion of comfort which distinguishes them from savages. They are cheaply, and, on the whole, comfortably lodged, with a view to the climate they inhabit, certainly a happy and temperate one for those who were born to dwell in it. Nature supplies them in profusion with the materials of house-building; the teak, or the bamboo, and the palm, are constantly at hand; and a hundred plants yield the materials of useful cordage. The Javanese do not want skill to apply them, and can lodge themselves very tolerably with a few hours’ labour. They are decently clothed with a coarse but durable fabric of cotton cloth; a manufacture which, in their ignorance of machinery, and of the division of labour, is comparatively high priced. Like all semi-barbarians, they are skilful imitators; and mimic, with surprising accuracy, the finest works in gold and silver, and are not unsuccessful even in the fabrication of iron and wood. They want, in short, but a little instruction, and a little more security, to make rapid progress in the ordinary arts.

We come now to the important subject of *Population*. The population of Java, as estimated by a census made in 1815, is 3,615,270. Considerable omissions, however, are supposed to have been made; and there can be little doubt that the actual population is moderately estimated at five millions; a number greater than the whole population of the New World on its discovery, and the existence of which, in this island, was, within these ten years, almost as little suspected in Europe as that of America before the voyage of Columbus. The lowest estimate gives to Java a population of about 100 to a square mile, which is but half the density of that of our old provinces in Bengal, according to the *first living* Oriental authority, Mr. Colchouke. In some of the more fertile and populous districts, we find it stated as high as 280; while, in one, and that a considerable district, it is stated as low as 7. Java is the only country of Asia that we know of, the population of which is rapidly increasing; and we may see, from the statement now given, that there is abundant room for it. The frame of society, in this respect, more resembles an American colony than any nation of Europe or Asia. The island ought to contain ten millions of inhabitants, if peopled in the ratio of Bengal, and millions, if peopled to the extent of Great Britain. The rapid increase of population is confined to the eastern districts, distinguished above the western by their fertility, and which had been wasted and depopulated about sixty years ago, but which have since been in a state of uninterrupted peace. From some highly interesting documents in our possession, we consider the doubling period in these to be little more than 35 years. In some situations, of peculiar advantage for fertility of soil, salubrity of climate, and abundance of new land, the doubling period is ascertained to be under 20 years. An interesting document given by our author shows that, in the comparatively sterile mountains of the west, the doubling period, on the contrary, is as long as 375 years. Even in the towns of the eastern districts, the doubling period is not longer than 45 years. The capital of the Sultan, which, when it was founded in 1655, did not contain five thousand inhabitants, now contains more than eighty thousand; and that of the Sahunan, founded nearly about the same time, of which the population was also considerable, though greater, is now one hundred and five thousand. The following extract illustrates the causes of this rapid increase.

"The peasantry of Java easily procuring the necessaries of life, seldom aim at the improvement of their condition. Rice is the principal food of all classes of the people, and the great staple of their agriculture. Of this necessary article, it is calculated that a labourer can, in ordinary circumstances, earn from four to five katis a day; and a kati being equivalent to one pound and a quarter avoirdupois, is reckoned a sufficient allowance for the support of an adult in these regions. The labour of the women in Java, is estimated almost as highly as that of the men; and thus a married couple can maintain eight or ten persons; and as a family seldom exceeds half that number, they have commonly half their earning applicable for the purchase of little comforts,—for implements of agriculture,—for clothing and lodging. The two last articles cannot be expensive in a country where the children generally go naked; and where the simplest structure possible, is sufficient to afford the requisite protection against the elements."

In the present relation of land subsistence, to population, the condition of landed tenures tends prodigiously to the encouragement of marriage, and the rapid increase of the inhabitants. The whole occupied land of the island is meted out to the people in petty farms of an acre or two to each family, so that there is hardly such a thing as a mere day-labourer. Each peasant labours his petty tenement with his own hand; and it is only here and there in the most populous districts, that this state of society is broken in upon, by the pressure of the population, on the lands which admit of culture on the present system of husbandry. A famine has not been known for sixty years; and in the present ratio of the population to the land that supports them, it is almost impossible, without supposing the calamity of a civil war, or some great convulsion of nature; for the soil yields its productions, in many instances, independent of season. A second or a third crop might be forced, and often is forced, on the failure of a first or second; so that a partial scarcity is the worst calamity that need be apprehended in the ordinary course of things. A country so situated, necessarily presents to us the rare and pleasing spectacle of a society without pauperism;—for a few victims of the Mahomedan law of mutilation, or those of a *fontaine disorder*, who are denied the support of their relations, can scarcely be considered as exceptions.

A very brief sketch of the civil history of the Javanese is all that we have time to give, and perhaps all that the public, under any circumstances, expect. The too ample details into which Sir Stamford Raffles has entered on this subject, are indeed, in our opinion, among the greatest blemishes of his work.

When Europeans and Mahomedans first became acquainted with the Javanese, towards the close of the sixteenth century, the best part of the island was subject to the Hindu sovereigns of Majapahit, in the eastern end of the island. The people were then Hindus, of the sect of Buddha, as is asserted by tradition, and more satisfactorily attested by the numerous, and indeed splendid relics of that worship which still exist in the ruins of architecture and sculpture. They had Bramins among them who adopted the arts of India, and kept up an intercourse with the eastern coast of the Peninsula, the country from which they first received their religion. Like other Hindus, they possessed no annals; but the curious antiquary, if not the historian, is enabled to trace their connexion with continental India, about three hundred years further back than our first acquaintance with them. In the

Christian year 1478, the dynasty of Majapahit was overthrown by emigrants from Arabia and the neighbouring isles, already converted, chiefly through the aid of the proselytes they had made among the natives; and Islamism was established on the ruins of the ancient religion, the monarchy was dismembered, and the great lords, or nobles, in charge of the provinces, became petty independent sovereigns in their respective districts. This state of things continued until the close of the sixteenth century, though some chiefs made on others, during this interval, successful usurpations or conquests. In this manner were formed the small kingdoms of Cheribon, of Jacatra, and of Bantam, names known in Europe; because with these Javanese States, which were maritime, took place the first intercourse of our earliest commercial adventurers to the East. Towards the close of the 16th century, the Lords of Mataram, a central province of the island, commenced a successful course of conquest; and in about half a century reduced the whole island, excepting perhaps Bantam, to a real or nominal subjection to their authority. About this period, the Dutch arrived on the island. They acquired in time a supremacy over Bantam. They made a conquest of Jacatra, in spite of the arms of Mataram; and towards the close of the seventeenth century, the supremacy over the kingdom of Cheribon was yielded to them by the sovereign of Mataram. From that period, until the commencement of the eighteenth century, they succeeded by degrees in wresting from the Javanese, by intrigue or conquest, the whole north coast of the island, with the entire eastern extremity, to the Province of Malang, downwards. Towards the middle of the 18th century, the weakness of the native power, and both the weakness and notorious inability of the mercantile government of the Dutch, brought on a destructive warfare of many years' continuance, which ended in the schism of the native sovereignty, which has established, nearly as it now stands, the political condition of the island. In 1811 the firm councils, aided by the personal presence of the late lamented Earl of Minto, placed Java under the protection of the British nation; after no contemptible struggle. In 1816 it was restored to the Dutch. This is probably as much of the history of Java, as can interest the popular or general reader.

The subject of *Revenue* next occupies our attention. The whole revenue of Java appears to be a million sterling and upwards; a prodigious sum, if we consider the uncivilized and unimproved state of the bulk of the population. But it will appear still greater, if we take into view the small expense at which, from its peculiar situation, the island might have been maintained as a British possession: no frontier to guard against an enemy; on the southern coast, an inaccessible iron-bound shore; on the north, a triumphant navy; and within, tranquillity and content, a garrison of 3000 men was then more than adequate. The principal branch of this revenue is a land rent, as in other countries of the East; but in Java, the condition of society was not sufficiently improved to suggest the advantage of commuting payments in kind, and other irregular contributions, into an uniform money rent, until the vigorous period of the British administration, when this change was happily effected. The sovereign's right to the property of the soil, is fully established in Java. The whole island is like a great Russian and Polish estate, of which the sovereign is the lord or proprietor, the people the serfs, and the nobles or officers of government the overseers and collectors. The island is parcelled out into petty farms of an acre or two, to the penniless peasant; and the rents fall into the improvident hands of the government, instead of those of a proprietor, not a farthing of it going to the improvement of the land. One-half of the estimated produce of the best lands, and one third of that of the worst, is exacted by the sovereign as his share. We may be quite sure that countries only of the most singular fertility, could withstand so exorbitant, and in Europe so unheard of a demand; and we may be also certain, that whenever such a plan is systematically persevered in, the country is doomed to inevitable and irretrievable poverty. We regret to say, that, following the pernicious example of the revenue system-mongers of Madras, the British government of Java adopted this principal of taxation in its utmost rigour; and in the revenue instructions issued by them to their officers, we accordingly discover, that the most ordinary rate of their demands is one half the estimated crop, at a value of the Collector's choosing, and that a fourth is the lowest demand.

This destructive system must be abandoned; and a private right of property in the soil gradually introduced. There is no country in which it is easier, if indeed it be easy anywhere, to surrender power illegally claimed and established. In the list of taxes, there are several that deserve to be noticed, for their singularity. The revenue on salt is censurable, because it is a monopoly. The salt is retailed from the public warehouses, at about ten times its actual value. Other taxes there are upon the necessities of life, in the pernicious form of licenses, as on butchers' meat, &c. &c. There still exist excise duties on articles that should not be exciseable,—in short, upon almost all articles, in the form of market duties and transit duties, &c. But the vilest source of revenue of all, is the commercial and agricultural monopoly of coffee. The philanthropy, and public spirit of our author, when he administered the affairs of Java, effected wonders in the reformation of these abuses; and his liberal views would have been completed had the colony remained a few years longer in our possession. The most singular article of revenue is the *birds' nests*. We find a regular revenue, of above three hundred thousand rupees, carried yearly to account for a few swallows' nests, collected at little or no expense. It is, in short, like levying a tax to this amount on the Chinese, the consumers of this very ridiculous luxury. The last subject of revenue which we shall notice, is opium. Seventy thousand pounds weight of this drug are annually smoked in Java, as innocently, perhaps, and we think more so than spirituous liquors are consumed in this country. A chest of opium (133 lbs.) which is manufac-



tured for 400 rupees, is sold in Bengal for \$200, for the benefit of the local government; and, being made again the subject of taxation, is ultimately retained to the Javanese at four times the last sum.

The last subject we have to treat is Colonization, on which we shall be very brief. Making due allowance for the fertility of Java, and its capacity to support a numerous population, we do not consider that it is at present peopled to more than one fourth of what it appears capable of maintaining, or twenty millions of people. There is abundant room, therefore, for emigrants from other countries: and, from whatever climate they be, they may find a genial residence. By the account of Sir Stamford Raffles, not more than one-seventh part of the area of the Island is occupied. Whatever objections to colonization may exist in the case of continental India, and, even there, we believe them to originate in no better motives than the dread of encroachment upon patronage, and the poor envy which power always feels towards freedom and fair competition, Java appears to us not to afford the shadow of one. The native population have no abhorrence of European, or other foreign manners; no gloomy unsociableness of disposition; but the very reverse. The diversity of religion, manners, and laws, appears at first view an obstacle, but is really none. It is edifying to trace the effects of that very diversity in the universal forbearance and liberality which it induces. We discover, in the Asiatic group of isles, the only great theatre where the varied population of Asia and Europe, even of Africa and America, meet none of the bigotry and intolerance which belong to most of them in their own country. A striking example may be quoted of its effects. There is a temple in the town of Batavia, the joint property of the Chinese and Mahomedans, where the worship of the god of Mahomed, and the deity of the Bonzos, is alternately performed. Nay, the Christians are tolerant to each other; and divine worship is performed in more than one of the churches of Java to both Catholics and Protestants. Were an entire freedom of colonization permitted, a right of private property in the soil established, justice respectfully administered, an entire freedom of commerce being of course supposed,—we do not hesitate to pronounce that Java, from its fertile soil and fortunate situation, would, in a very moderate period of time, become the first colony in the world. Until those principles be acted upon, we despair of seeing Java; or any other Indian settlement, any thing than a burden to the mother country, and an object of patronage to the party in power. We have no opportunity of estimating, from experience, the advantages which an industrious race of colonists would produce, except in the instance of the Chinese; and here it is quite undeniable. The labour, skill, and enterprise of 34,000 of that indefatigable people, produce incalculable advantages to Java, which are to be traced in every department of industry. We may, from this instructive fact, form some estimate of what the superior genius and intelligence of European colonists could effect.

But we must now hasten to a conclusion; and shall only add a few remarks on the general character of the work itself.—The book is hastily written, and not very well arranged. It is a great deal too bulky, and too expensive, to be popular; and has, consequently, not been nearly so much read as its intrinsic merits entitle it to be. The style is fluent, but diffuse, and frequently careless. We should guess that Sir Stamford Raffles composes with too much facility, and blots too little. The sixth and seventh chapters, which describe the character, habits, manners, customs, and amusements of the people, are the best of the whole work, and indeed excellent. The ninth, tenth, and eleventh, which give an account of the Religion and History, are by far the worst. In determining the Chronology, great errors have been committed. There is a propensity to magnify the importance of the early story of the Javanese; and, in calculating and adapting the Native, to Christian time, the principle has been wholly mistaken, and an error of several years throughout the whole is the consequence. The map is the best ever compiled; and the plates equally correct and beautiful, such as might be expected from the long established reputation of Mr. Daniel.

### Alphabets.

*L'Alphabet Européen appliqué aux Langues Asiatique; Ouvrage élémentaire, utile à tout Voyageur en Asie. Par C. F. Volney, Comte et Pair de France, Membre de l'Académie Française, Honoraire de la Société Asiatique, résidant à Calcutta. Paris, chez Firmin Didot.*

All the alphabets now employed, from the western extremity of Europe to the Indus, may be traced with historical certainty to one original,—the Phenician, Samaritan, or Syriac. Of these contiguous countries, the letters and the languages always analogous, were once probably the same. 'Phenicia and Palestine,' says Mr. Gibbon, 'will for ever live in the memory of mankind: since America, as well as Europe, has received Letters from the one, and Religion from the other.' It was in that primitive character, and not in the Hebrew, that the sacred historian delivered to posterity the only authentic records of the creation of the world, and the primeval transactions of the human race.

About the same period, the Phenician communicated to the savages of Europe the knowledge of letters. The testimony of Herodotus, and the general current of tradition, attest the Phenician origin of the Greek alphabet. We are aware, that the former is ambiguous; and that the passage may mean merely, that the followers of Cadmus introduced certain letters previously unknown to the inhabitants of Greece, and in which their alphabet was deficient; not that they first taught the use of letters to an illiterate people: Yet the contrary is the more obvious construction; and, in the absence of any testimony, we should be disposed to draw the same in-

ference, and that with considerable confidence, from the relative position of the letters which constitute the alphabet. In an arrangement wholly arbitrary, it is scarcely possible, that the same order should be generally observed, as we find it in the Syriac and Grecian alphabets, unless the one were borrowed from the other. A, B, C, D, &c.—there is no reason why these letters should follow in this order: one is a vowel, and the other three consonants, and each produced by different organs of speech. The order might consequently be inverted, without violating any conceivable principle. The general agreement is therefore a conclusive proof of the origin of the more modern. Like its original too, the Greek was first written from the right hand to the left. Yet it is singular, that of the four characters which, as Pliny informs us, were subsequently added by Palamedes, three existed in the Syriac alphabet, and might have been introduced from the first. The most singular thing, however, is, that the Greeks were no sooner in possession of this new instrument, than they brought it to a degree of perfection, which it never attained in the country of its birth. There the short vowels are uniformly omitted, and left to the sagacity of the reader to supply; but we believe, that in the most ancient and rudest of the Greek inscriptions which have been preserved, the vowels are regularly inserted.

The Pelasgi, says Pliny, first brought letters into Latium. Now, the Pelasgi had originally occupied that part of Greece, into which Cadmus and his Phenicians had introduced the Syriac alphabet: and consequently, we cannot be surprised to find, that the characters which they brought into Italy, were the same with those first used by the Greeks. The letter E had originally the powers both of K and G. On the column of Dilius, there was inscribed *leones* and *macistratos*, for *legiones* and *magistratus*. G was added to the alphabet in the 6th century of the republic. Dionysius Halicarnassensis had seen at Rome, in the temple of Diana, a column, on which Servius Tullius had caused the laws to be engraved; and he has reported, that it exhibited the most ancient characters of Greece. The empire of Rome disseminated its letters to the utmost extremity of the West, where, perpetuated by the art of printing, literature now seems to bid defiance to those events which have swept from the earth the ancient monuments of Assyrian, Babylonian, and Persian knowledge, and threatened to involve even those of Greece and Rome in one general ruin.—We must now pursue our inquiries into the East.

The Hebrew character seems to have been brought by the Jews from Babylon; and, after the captivity, gradually supplanted the Samaritan, in which the sacred books had previously been written. M. l'Abbé Barthélemy, in a dissertation on two medals of Antigonus, king of Judea, (one of the last of the Asmonean princes), both of which are in Samaritan characters, observes, that, to the proofs drawn from medals, of the Samaritan character being employed to a much later period than is usually supposed, may be added two passages, one drawn from the Mishna, a work composed near the end of the 2d century, and another from the Talmud of Jerusalem, between 60 and 70 years later. 'These two passages,' says M. Barthélemy, 'declare in substance, that the texts of the Bible destined to be publicly read, should be without Chaldaic paraphrases, and in Assyrian letters. But that it is permitted for private use to employ a copy, in which the paraphrase is incorporated with the text, and written in Samaritan characters.' This passage, in which the Hebrew character is termed Assyrian letters, may suffice to show the opinion entertained by the Jews, at a period long subsequent. The Hebrew character may certainly have been that in use in the celebrated cities founded by Ninus and Semiramis, whose structures attested the progress which the arts had made at the time they flourished. But the matter must be considered as still doubtful; and the affirmative does not appear to be confirmed, by an inspection of the bricks recently brought to Europe from Babylon.

The conquests of the early Caliphs extinguished the ancient letters and literature of Asia, from the Mediterranean to the Indus. In their room was introduced the recently invented Arabic character. After a few centuries, when the memory and the names of ancient philosophers, poets, and historians, were finally obliterated, Asia might again boast of poets, endowed with warm imaginations; and with powers of vivid description, and might number her annalists, whose accuracy as to dates and political events, in times subsequent to the Mohamedan era, might have obtained for them the title of historians, were the chief object of history to ascertain dates, to register the births and deaths of kings, or to record, without describing, the wars which confirmed or overturned a reigning dynasty.

The original of the Arabic character is thus stated by the learned Baron de Sacy.

'The best Arabian historians agree, that the written character now used by that nation, was invented only in the beginning of the fourth century of the Hegira, about the year 910 of our era, by the Visir Ebn Moalla; and that it was less an invention, than a reform, rendered necessary by the disorder, which the caprice and negligence of copyists had introduced into the character previously made use of. This anterior character was brought for the first time (about the year 558 of our era) to the countries of Mecca and Medina, where the art of writing was previously unknown. The first inhabitant of Mecca who learned it, was Harb, a cousin german of Mohamed's father, who was born, as is well known, in A. D. 571. This Harb acquired it from an inhabitant of Hira, who had himself learned it at Anbar, from two Arabs of the tribe of Tai, who had come to settle there. Hira and Anbar are two cities on the Euphrates.

'In the most ancient Arabian monuments, this character was of a square form, similar to the Assyrian character called *estrangelo*. Now, as the tribe of Tai, established in the Syrian desert, always carried on a commercial intercourse with the coast, we are entitled to conclude, that it was in fact the Syriac alphabet, then used, which the two Arabs brought to the cities of Anbar and Hira. This conclu-

sign is corroborated by the circumstance, that the present number of 28 Arabic characters, and their order in the alphabet, are not of so ancient a date, and that before Mohamed the letters were classed according to the relative order of the 22 Syrian letters.

Stretching eastward from the Indus, to the doubtful limits of the Chinese empire, where alphabetical writing gradually disappears, the inhabitants have retained and employ their ancient characters. The number of different alphabets actually used within the space described is uncertain, probably not less than twenty. But all those known to Europeans discover a common origin. 1. There is a general agreement in the position of the letters in the alphabet. 2. Each letter is a syllable, consisting either of a vowel, or of a consonant and vowel, both denoted by a single character. These peculiarities of the Indian alphabets are universal, however great the discrepancy in the form of the letters, as in those of Tibet, Ava, &c. and are amply sufficient to justify the inference, that they are all derived from one original alphabet. But was this the Deva Nagari in which the Brahmins now write their ancient books? The beauty and rounded forms of this character in its present state, scarcely allow us to ascribe it to a remote antiquity; and numberless inscriptions attest the former existence of characters now unknown. The original prototype is probably lost; but it may in the lapse of ages have undergone alterations and improvements, and the various alphabets of India may have been transplanted from it, at different periods, to the countries where they are now found.

To whatever period, the invention of letters in Hindustan may be assigned, two facts seem unquestionable. 1. That the period when they received their present arrangement, must have been one of high civilization, compared with that in which the western alphabets originated. 2. That it must have preceded the period at which the other alphabets retaining the same arrangement were conveyed to the regions where they are now employed. In this arrangement nothing is arbitrary. The vowels are placed first, comprehending distinct characters for the long and short ones, and for the sounds we term diphthongs. The consonants follow, arranged according to the organs of speech by which they are elicited. Gutturals, dentals, labials, nasals, &c. form each a distinct class, distinguished by a Sanscrit name, analogous to those we have just mentioned. A classification so scientific must obviously have been the work of a period of refinement, and preceded their dissemination into other countries.

The celebrated Comte de Volney, whose travels into Egypt and Syria first conveyed to Europe correct notions of the actual state of those countries, has dedicated the small Work which has suggested the preceding observations, to his colleagues of the Asiatic Society of Calcutta. In 1795, about the time of his emigration to America, he published a Work on the simplification of Oriental languages. My system, says the Comte, à titre d'innovation, ne pouvait manquer d'être attaqué par les anciennes habitudes. Je veillai l'occasion de le défendre; cette occasion se presenta en 1803. Le gouvernement Français venait de commander le somptueux ouvrage de la Description de l'Égypte; il voulut qu'une carte géographique y fut jointe, et que sur cette carte la double nomenclature Arabe et Française fut tracée, littéralement correspondante. Les Arabistes de Paris trouvèrent la chose impraticable, vu la différence des prononciations; mes idées nouvelles sur cette matière étoient connues; Je fus invité à en faire l'application.

The reflections which our author was thus led into on this subject, have impressed him with a high idea of the importance of an universal alphabet for promoting the civilization and improvement of Asia, by facilitating the acquisition of Eastern languages to Europeans, and, what he estimates much more highly, the acquisition of European knowledge to the Asiatic.

Un antique préjugé vante vainement la littérature Orientale; le bon goût et la raison attestent qu'aucun fonds d'instruction solide ni de science positive n'existe en ses productions: l'histoire n'y recite que des fables, la poésie que des hyperboles; la philosophie n'y professe que des sophismes, la médecine que des recettes, la métaphysique que des absurdités; l'histoire naturelle, la physique, la chimie, les hautes mathématiques y ont à peine des noms; l'esprit d'un Européen ne peut que se retrécir et se gâter à cette école; c'est aux orientaux de venir à celle de l'occident; le jour où les hommes d'Europe traduiront facilement leurs idées dans les langues d'Asie, ils s'acquerront partout en cette contrée, une supériorité décidée sur les indigènes en tout genre d'affaires.

The reasoning by which our author supports the utility of the alphabet he has invented, is as follows:—

Il faut l'avouer, le premier aspect des alphabets orientaux frappe le disciple Européen d'une agnation pénible et décourageante; la figure des lettres est étrange pour lui; son amour propre se sent blessé de ne s'y rien comprendre; déjà loin de l'enfance il va redevenir écolier; il s'alarme avec raison du travail d'introduire en sa mémoire tant de signes bizarres, et de plier sa main à une habitude que l'âge adulte supporte bien plus impatiemment que l'enfance: ce ne sont là que des préliminaires: l'explication commence: il a coutume d'écrire de gauche à droite, on lui ordonne d'écrire de droite à gauche; son écriture Européenne trace tout ce qui se prononce; l'écriture Asiatique en général n'en trace qu'une partie. La faible enfance se plie à ce joug, mais le disciple adulte y résiste. Il faut rendre compte de ses idées; après un premier étonnement passant à la réflexion, il argumente et se dit:—

Si l'organisation humaine est la même en Asie, qu'en Europe, le langage dans ce pays là, doit être composé d'éléments semblables aux nôtres, par conséquent de voyelles, de consonnes, et d'aspirations; dès lors les alphabets Asiatiques ne doivent être comme les nôtres, que la liste des signes qui représentent ces éléments; mais ces signes peuvent avoir deux manières d'être: ils peuvent être simples, comme les éléments A, E, D, P, &c. ou composés, formant sous un seul trait, des syllabes, et même des mots entiers; dans l'un et l'autre cas c'est une pure permutation d'alphabet, par laquelle des signes divers sont appliqués à des types identiques. Pourquoi cette diversité de tableaux? Il faut opter entre deux partis;

si ces lettres que je ne connais pas, représentent des sons que je connais, je n'ai pas besoin d'elles; je puis me servir de mon alphabet accoutumé; si au contraire ces lettres représentent des sons inconnus à mon oreille, l'étude va me les faire apprécier, et même sans pouvoir les prononcer, je pense leur donner des signes, leur attribuer des lettres de convention déduites de celles que je connais. On me présente vingt alphabets divers, par conséquent vingt diverses figures d'une même voyelle, que j'appelle A, d'un même consonne que j'appelle B: pourquoi chargerai-je ma mémoire de ces vingt répétitions, une seule figure me suffit; avec une seule alfabet, je veux peindre toutes les prononciations de ces langues; comme avec un seul système d'écriture musicale, je puis peindre tous les tons, tous les chants des divers peuples de la terre.

In the first book, our author treats of spoken sounds, and of the letters which represent them; and his observations on this subject seem to us always clear, and sometimes new. In the second, he passes in review all the pronunciations which occur in the languages of Europe; and he finds that they consist of 19 or 20 vowels, and 32 consonants. The Roman alphabet is incapable of representing that number; but known already, both in Europe and America, he takes it for the basis of his alphabet, which he renders universal, by assigning different powers to the redundant letters, and adding to others certain signs to represent those sounds in which the common alphabet is deficient. In the third part, he applies his system to the Arabic alphabet, as one of the most complicated of Asia. From this operation springs a new alphabet, which may be called European, equally applicable to the Arabic, the Turkish, the Persian, Syriac, and Hebrew. It is now, says our author, only requisite to extend its application to the languages of India, and of the rest of Asia.

'Mais par qui?' (addressing himself to the Asiatic Society) 's'exécuteront tant de travaux préparatoires, à la fois scientifiques et pécuniaires? J'ose le garantir; par vous, Messieurs! oui, par vous dont l'association libre, éclairée, généreuse, placée en avant garde sur les bords du Gange, y a élevé les premiers signaux de la civilisation. Fidèle au caractère national, vous ne repousserez point une industrie nouvelle, sans avoir bien examiné ce qu'elle a d'utile ou de defectueux.'

We are most ready to acknowledge the benefits that would result from the adoption of an universal alphabet, in facilitating intercourse, promoting civilization, and diffusing knowledge. We readily admit also, that an alphabet, formed on the principles of M. Volney, would be much more perfect than any which exists at present. But this benevolent project, in its application to the natives of India, would encounter difficulties of which the Comte is little aware, and which will probably either prevent the attempt, or paralyze its execution. Of these we do not think it necessary to say any thing on this occasion: For the really practical question at present is, whether elementary works for the instruction of students in the Oriental languages, might not advantageously be composed in such a conventional character? By substituting this for the various alphabets now used, some trouble would certainly be saved to beginners, and much expence to the East India Company. The experience and acknowledged success of Dr. Gilchrist in teaching Hindustani, by an analogous method, affords some confirmation to the theory of M. de Volney.

### Miscellanea.

The following account of a singular marriage of a man both deaf and dumb is interesting for more than one reason; it proves that under the heaviest misfortunes that can befall us, there are sources of consolation open to us, and whilst we read the contrivances resorted to in this instance to make up for the melancholy affliction under which the bridegroom laboured, we cannot but advert with heartfelt gratification to the vast superiority of the means of communication, which the rapid progress of science has in the present day, procured for such unfortunates, thro the medium of our deaf and dumb schools. The paragraph to which we allude and which has been cited as an anecdote worthy of greater publicity, in the English Papers, is as follows

In the Register of St. Martin's Parish, Leicester, Decimo quinto Februarii, 18, Eliz. regina.

Thomas Tilsly and Ursula Russet, were married, and because the said Thomas is naturally deaf and dumb, could not for his part observe the order of the form of marriage. After the approbation had from Thomas the Bishop of Lincoln John Chigpendale, L. L. D. and commissary, and Mr. Richard Davis, mayor of Leicester, and others of his brethren, with the rest of the parish, the said Thomas, for expressing of his mind, instead of words, of his accord used these signs: first, embraced her with his arms, took her by the hand and put a ring on her finger, and laid his hand upon his heart, and held up his hands towards heaven; and to show his continuance to dwell with her to his life's end, he did it by closing his eyes with his hands, and digging the earth with his feet, and pulling as though he would ring a bell, with other signs approved. Condicta cum originali. S. H.

The justly celebrated Lessing was frequently very absent. Having misused money at different times without being able to discover who took it, he determined to put the honesty of his servant to a trial, and left a handful of gold on his table. "Of course you counted it?" said one of his friends. "Counted it," said Lessing, rather embarrassed, no; I forgot that."

The following is a similar trait: In a public sale there was a book which Lessing was very desirous of possessing. He gave three of his friends at different times, a commission to buy it at any price. They accordingly bid against each other till they had got as far as 90 crowns, there having been no other bidder after 10 crowns. Happily one of them thought it best to speak to the other, when it appeared that they had all been bidding for Lessing; whose forgetfulness in this instance cost him 80 crowns.



## Literary and Antiquarian Research.

To the Editor of the Calcutta Journal.

Sir,

It is with high satisfaction, I perceive the name of VIATOR, enrolled amongst those of the labourers in the vineyard of Asiatic Science. The number of votaries, who have devoted themselves to the promotion of Literature, during the last ten years, has indeed been few. But let us indulge the delightful, and may we trust not transient, hope, that better times are at length approaching; that the unworthy stigma is about to be wiped away; and that the example and exertions of such men as VIATOR, and the Gentleman, whom upon a former occasion, I had the honor to address through the medium of your Journal, will produce *speedily and finally*, the complete removal of those degrading and unaccountable shackles, which seemed to bind all the energetic faculties of our minds within the spell of apathy, and withhold almost every member of the community, from advancing to the support of neglected and despairing learning.

It is chiefly with a view to rectify a misconception on the part of your Correspondent, that I am at present induced to solicit your attention, and the occupation of a column in the *Calcutta Journal*. The idea expressed in my preceding letter, VIATOR will excuse me for remarking, was not intended to convey any intimation of "holding out an offer of *emolument* to a member of the Asiatic Society, by way of rousing him into energy in the investigation or pursuit of Science or Research;—but simply, as stated in that communication, to observe, a small salary or sum is indispensable "for the purpose of enabling those persons to pursue with success the different branches of General Research."

Members of that Institution are frequently, Sir, in the course of service, placed in various situations all over this extensive country, in which it lies within the compass of their power to render essential benefit to the increase of knowledge, particularly by enriching the Museum with relics of antiquity, and rare and curious products of nature, that are found in abundance in different parts of Hindoostan; I might assert in every portion of the country, where the inquirer deems it of importance to search for their existence. Yet contributions of this kind are often I know withheld, from a deficiency of means to defray the costs of conveyance, and other expenses incident to the collection and preservation of ponderous images, whose value is in general proportioned to their bulk.

Now, difficulties of this kind, frequently insurmountable to an unassisted individual, would be entirely obviated, by means of a limited supply, allotted by the Asiatic Society to such of its members, as would undertake the task of collecting and forwarding to Calcutta the different articles that might be procurable within the vicinity of his station, or be brought under his notice in the course of travelling into various parts of the country, where the servants of the Company are led more by chance than preconcerted design.

Some months back, an offer was made to MANETHO of a valuable ancient statue, being sent from a very distant part of the country, in order to be presented to the Museum in Calcutta. Yet this fine image, which, from the description given by the Gentleman who made the offer, is decidedly one of the most remarkable with which we have become acquainted, would if it could have been deposited in the Museum, to be rendered accessible to all, and subjected to the inspection of the learned, throw vast light upon many obscure points connected with Indian History; but it cannot be removed and transmitted to Calcutta without the incurring of pecuniary expense.\*

Now, let me ask, is it reasonable, that individuals where the object is so manifestly the public good, should be obliged to expend their means for such a purpose, and perhaps at the moment, to their own serious inconvenience, when a sum of little consequence to the society would be fully adequate for the accomplishment of the end? or, is it consistent with the object, which the Members of the Society profess to have in view, that valuable vestiges of this description should be entirely lost, when the appropriation of a part of the funds would be amply sufficient to secure them to the museum, and therefore to the advantage of the Members of the Institution, and the public of Calcutta and India at large. But could a part of the accumulating donations of the numerous Members be devoted to a more laudable purpose? I have myself occasionally contributed to the Museum, and trifling as the contributions, are which I have had it within my power to bestow, yet I am well aware that they would have been far more extensive, and still more worthy of the Society's and the Public's inspection, had assistance been afforded to enable researches to be carried into effect, which cannot be accomplished without the requisite means at the moment, to defray expenses that, in such cases, are in various modes unavoidably incurred.

The number and variety of antiquities at present procurable for money in the Upper Provinces would be hardly credible to those whose views have never been attracted to this subject; and many more would be rescued from destruction if it were once made known, that they were in request and exchangeable for current money. Roman and Grecian coins exist even in the common bazars; a few days ago I received information of two ancient gold

\* I am not an advocate for the removal of antiquities, when discovered and likely to be retained in their original situation; but throughout India, the most precious relics are found forming portions of dilapidated walls, or sadly mutilated and thrown into holes and ditches. The removal of the articles from these situations therefore tends to their preservation. The same is the case on the Island of Java.

coins, impressed with heads and inscribed with Roman or Greek Letters, being in the possession of a *shraff*, but before my arrival they had been sold to a goldsmith and melted down to form earrings. Yet these and similar articles are not procurable without money; and is not the preservation of such precious remains the most worthy object to which the views of the Society could be directed?

In this country, where public bodies, or corporations, do not exist, the Asiatic Society, rendered resplendent by the name of *Jones*, and honoured with the patronage of the Government, is an Institution to which the Public, and with justice, look with awakened expectations; and it rests with those best acquainted with the proceedings of its public and private meetings to say, whether they are conducted, in regard of the acquisitions obtained, the facts that are brought to light, and recorded through the Society's means, and the care that is bestowed to encourage Asiatic investigation in all its branches, in the manner its immortal Founder anticipated, or is due to the illustrious protection, greater than ever before known, with which its periodical meetings are at present patronised.

The whole country teems with the riches of Science and the treasures of Antiquity; men of intelligence, anxious to contribute their assistance, and well able to advance the interests of the Institution, and promote the cause of learning, are likewise not wanting; but to use the energetic language of your Correspondent, their desires are rendered nugatory, and their exertions vain, "by the cold breath that freezes even the boldest spirit of enterprise in the outset of the attempt."

The proposal of VIATOR, in respect to a reward, such as a medal, being given to those persons who eminently distinguish themselves in different departments of Science or Research, a method followed in the various Scientific Institutions that exist in our native country, must claim the approbation of us all: yet I much fear that such a proposal in India is not likely, at least soon, to be carried into effect. I contemplate the plan as the felicitous vision which passes in a delicious but evanescent dream, that for an instant pleases the imagination, and sober judgment tells me partakes not of existence in reality. Let the language of adulation be that of others, but here the language of truth shall be mine.

In this country, strange and rude as the assertion may appear, I affirm the expanded spirit does not generally exist over the community, which is necessary to give life and effect to such a noble proposal. Instead of commendation, scientific discoveries are viewed at present with jealousy, and marked with terms of discouragement. No proper incitement is given to circulation; scientific zeal is repressed as the arrogance of an intruder upon the respect which is due to *seniority and rank*, and philosophic ardour, unaided and discouraged, is thus rendered a defenceless butt, for the shafts of ridicule or an object of the ebullitions of anger.

It is also with much pleasure, I observe in VIATOR not one of the servile copyists, who so long have formed the majority of our Indian Literati; luminaries, who see and hear nothing except what is contained within the writings of former celebrated Oriental scholars; but an original observer, who assumes the privilege of thinking for himself and questioning the veracity of the natives, whose idle tales and demonstrations of ignorance have too frequently been received and even published by us as the records of absolute and infallible truths. His observations respecting the *Vasa Paduka* at *Bhangulpore* are particularly valuable, and I trust for his indulgence while I offer the following remarks.

I fully acquiesce in opinion with your Correspondent, that MANETHO "has not pointed out the full quantum of Colonel Francklin's error." But elucidations of this kind did not form my object, which was not extended to a general criticism upon the "Essay on the site of Palibothra," but confined to the exposition of a prominent error, proceeding from an obvious cause, namely, the dependence upon information received through the medium of a Persian translation, instead of acquaintance with the original language in which the inscription is written. Had critical remarks upon the entire Essay constituted the purpose of my observations, MANETHO would even have advanced farther than your Correspondent, and called in question the authenticity of the "Dialogue between a spiritual Preceptor and his Disciple," which explains the reason of the change of the appellation of the river named "*Eran Bhowah*," into "*Chundrabettee*," or "*Chundun*." This document is said to be extracted from the *Ootur Poraná*; but so far as I am enabled to judge, upon intrinsic evidence, it appears to me to exhibit an example of those improvisatorial inventions, which possess no authority whatever, composed by a Brahmin, upon the spur of the moment, to overcome a difficulty, and conceal his own ignorance, a measure to which other men would feel ashamed to have recourse, but which Pundits never scruple to employ; and the materials of which their prolific, unrestrained, imaginations, added by a familiar acquaintance with common Sanscrit, are always ready and adequate to supply.

I confess myself incompetent to determine the doubt started by your Correspondent, regarding the City of *Jayapore*. Yet under either supposition, whether we believe the City in question to be the one founded by *Jey Sing* (the astronomer I presume) during the reign of Muhammad Shah; or pronounce it to be another, possessing the same name, but situated in a different part of Hindoostan, the circumstances will still remain unaffected, which assign the date of the inscription upon the slab to a distance within 200 years from the present period. The towers, as they are represented in the plate, for I have not myself possessed opportunity of examining the spot, are evidently of modern construction; and built in the *Musulman* or *Hindoo* style, which is easily recognisable by those who have been accustomed to examine fabrics of real and ancient Hindoo architecture.

occurred to me, during the course of the present discussion, that the worship of the Jains, their manners, customs, and tenets, strongly resemble the doctrine and worship of the ancient *Brachmans* of India, as described by *Arrian* and other Greek Authors (p. 14.) a passage of this kind, which conveys an original and accurate observation, I have no hesitation in saying tends to cast more illumination upon the manners and religion of the Hindoos, than volumes written after the mode that is at present fashionable amongst our Orientalists; I mean servilely copying the works of Sir Wm. Jones, and spinning out drawing commentaries upon the texts afforded in his writings.

Research, Sir, I am well convinced will ultimately establish the fact, that what is in our days termed the *Jain sect*, was formerly the only religion known to the inhabitants of India; and it continued unaltered, generally speaking, till the period of the Mussulman invasion, when the present heterogeneous and heretical *Brahminical* system arose upon its ruins, and gradually continued to augment till the reign of Aurungzebe, who by his persecutions, massacres, and destruction of temples and books, gave full scope to the heterodoxy, by almost entirely annihilating every trace of the ancient idolatrous religion that had for many ages prevailed in India.

In consequence of reiterated persecutions, within the last thousand years a host of novel deities, or at least the ancient objects of superstition disguised by new appellations, have made their appearance. The remains of the edifices devoted to the former system are seen to greatest perfection on the Island of Java; and there we still behold, as indeed is also the case on the Peninsula, *Siva* or the image of the *Regenerator*, attended by his prophet or priest *Buddha*, that is *Patriarchism*, or the religion which prevailed subsequent to the deluge, corrupted into the worship of *Baal*—*Baal-Zebub*, or *Bul Seba*, that formerly existed, with the exception of the Jewish nation alone amongst every people found upon the surface of the Earth. The same system of idolatry continued, till the Revelation of our Saviour communicated a shock to this gigantic superstition, from which it has since been unable, and never will be enabled at any future period to recover.

Now, these being the legitimate conclusions to which personal observation made upon the ancient structures existing in this country, leads, and the deductions we are compelled to draw from the fact, that, in all ancient temples, the images of *Siva* and *Buddha* or *Prausinauth*, are discovered together, it was with astonishment I perused the following sentence in a late number of your Journal, as extracted from the "*Friend of India*." This flood of superstitions, forming itself into two branches, above two thousand years ago, *HINDOOSTAN* and *BOUDDHISM*.\* This opinion is a mere transcript of that which is delivered by the great FAKER, in his last admirable Work. "The origin of Pagan Idolatry." But that intelligent writer, whose praise it would scarcely be possible to extend beyond his wonderful literary merits, grounded his ideas upon the writings which have been communicated from India. We, however, who reside upon the spot, ought to know better, and our endeavours should be directed to correct not to copy the mistakes of the learned in Europe.

This fact, therefore, in conjunction with others, inculcates the absolute necessity of General Research, and personal observation; for if these be neglected, we shall at length find instead of proving "*Friends to India*," that we are merely erecting a fabric of error, recording our own ignorance, to the obstruction of knowledge, and rearing a monument to excite the derision, instead of commanding the admiration of posterity.

Your Obedient Servant,

September 18, 1819.

MANETHO.

\* I may here remark that *Salicahana*, *Saka*, or the younger *Buddha*, is undoubtedly *CHRIST*. The first appellation seems a corruption of *Salvator*.

### Stanzas.

#### THE ÆOLIAN HARP.

SOFT played the breezes o'er the lyre,  
And woke its wild aerial swell,  
While, like the notes of angel choir,  
Its solemn sweetness rose and fell.  
The queen of heaven her radiance bright  
Shed o'er the dim but lovely scene,  
And played, with mild and chastening light,  
O'er waving groves and dewy green.  
The rays that through the casement shone,  
Fell on the wind-lyre's plaintive string,  
And seemed to mingle with its tone,  
And makes its notes more sweetly ring.  
Could ought a single charm impart  
To grace a scene so soft and fair?  
Yes,—for the music of the heart  
And beauty's light were added there.  
How swift the winged moments flew,  
In social converse pass'd away,  
With pleasure, pure as moonbeam's hue,  
Enchanting as the Æolian lay.

S. B.

Printed at the Union Press, in Garstin's Buildings, near the Bankshall and the Exchange.

### Elegiac.

#### STANZAS ON THE DEATH OF A. J. MACAN, ESQ.

When we the changeful course of Life review,  
And daily watch its ebbings and its flows;  
What mind can reckless its career pursue,  
Or fail to meditate upon its close?

Death's pageantry before our eyes displays  
The solemn horrors of its last sad rite,  
And bids us think, as silently we gaze,  
On Life's unstable hold, and warlike flight.

But do we ponder o'er the tenure frail,  
Or contemplate, beyond the passing hour,  
How weak have been our efforts to prevail  
Against the World's delusive tempting power?

Ah no! tho' round us yearly we decry  
Friend after friend resign the parting breath,  
No lively hopes of blest futurity  
Awaken us to penitence and Death.

See you the weeping crowd that slowly gains  
In mournful track along yon winding road,  
The solemn hearse a Friend's cold corpse contains,  
And silent bears him to his last abode.

Mark the moist eye that bursts with many a tear,  
For one whose virtues shone with purest light,  
Whose charity was open and sincere,  
Whose mild benevolence beamed sweetly bright.

He had a heart that melted at distress,  
A hand that met its impulse without shew,  
His was the pride to succour wretchedness,  
To cheer the industrious, and to raise the low.

Warm as the generous land that gave him birth,  
His hospitality was kind and free,  
He loved to give encouragement to worth,  
And prop the bending stem of modesty.

Gay was the heart that knew no ill or guile,  
And buoyant ever were his spirits found;  
His presence lit an universal smile,  
And warmed the hearts of all his friends around.

From infancy, Religion's path he trod,  
His faith was pure, by Christian tenets given,  
He could not err,—who loved and feared his God!  
He could not fall,—who strove to merit Heaven!

Enjoying health, such as but few can boast,  
His active energies no respite knew;  
And those who knew him best, revered him most,  
For admiration with his virtues grew.

That ready hand, for Charity is cold,  
And dim that eye, that spoke the feeling mind,  
No more that tongue its generous thoughts unfold,  
And still that heart which beat for all mankind.

Yet will he live in many a grateful breast,  
Close sepulchred, tho' all his loss deplore;  
And all who knew his virtues, will, distress'd,  
Sigh at the knell that rings, 'MACAN's no more.'

Calcutta, October 5, 1819.

AMICUS.

#### THE RAIN-BOW.

The day has pass'd in storms, though not unmix'd  
With transitory calm. The western clouds,  
Dissolving slow, unveil the glorious sun,  
Majestic in decline. The wat'ry east  
Glow with the many-tinted arch of HEAV'N.  
We hail it as a pledge that brighter skies  
Shall bless the coming morn. Thus rolls the day,  
The short dark day of life; with tempests thus,  
And fleeting sun-shine chequer'd. At its close,  
When the dread hour draws near, that bursts all ties,  
All commerce with the world, RELIGION pours  
Horn's fairy-colours on the virtuous mind,  
And, like the rain-bow on the evening clouds,  
Gives the bright promise that a happier dawn  
Shall chase the night and silence of the grave.

J. B.